

NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE A PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (PEA) FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announces its intent to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for wildfire mitigation projects throughout the State of South Dakota.

The purpose of this action is to fund activities that reduce the wildfire hazard in urban interface communities and reduce hazards that may occur in areas that have experienced a wildfire. Wildfire hazard mitigation activities are funded under FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) and other programs, as authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended (Stafford Act). Requirements for hazard mitigation activities are found in the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance.

FEMA hereby publishes this notice of intent to prepare a PEA for these actions, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (PL 91-190) and associated environmental statutes, as implemented in FEMA 108-1. Notice is also published in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as implemented in 36 CFR Part 800; and Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management and Executive Order 11990, Wetlands Protection, as implemented in 44 CFR Part 9; since these actions may have the potential to affect historic, cultural and archaeological resources, floodplains and wetlands.

This statewide PEA will address the purpose and need of the proposed projects, project alternatives considered (including the 'No Action' alternative), affected environment, environmental consequences, and impact mitigation measures. The proposed action(s) being considered for funding are fire-related mitigation activities such as maintenance of defensible space and hazardous fuels reduction; and activities that reduce hazards associated with burned landscapes such as erosion and flooding, noxious weeds, and hazardous burned trees. Appropriate Best Management Practices (BMP) will be implemented, and all actions must comply with applicable federal, tribal, state and local regulations and requirements. Once completed, the draft PEA will be available for public review and comment.

A public comment period will remain open for 15 days following publication of this notice. In addition to this initial comment period, a final comment period will be opened upon availability of the draft PEA.

Interested persons may provide comments or obtain more detailed information about the alternatives by contacting Daniel Jones, FEMA Region VIII, Environmental Specialist, Denver Federal Center, PO Box 25267 Denver, CO 80225, or by email at daniel.jones5@fema.dhs.gov. Comments will be accepted from the affected public; local, state, tribal and federal agencies; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate environmental impacts of the proposed projects.